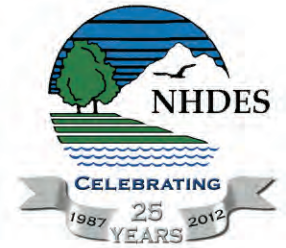


# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS



Newsletter of the N.H. Department of Environmental Services

January-February 2012

## COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN

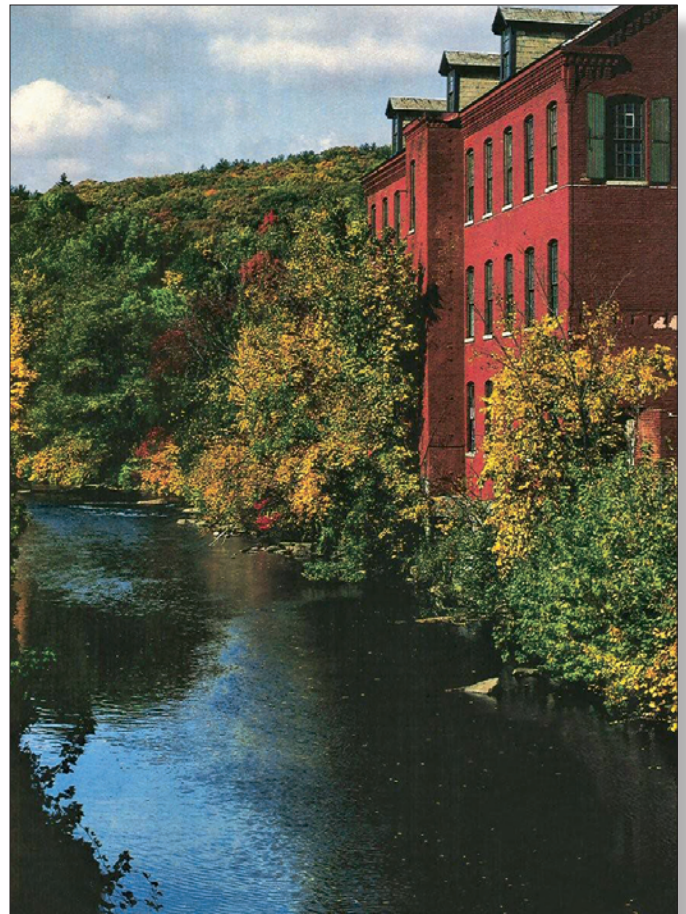
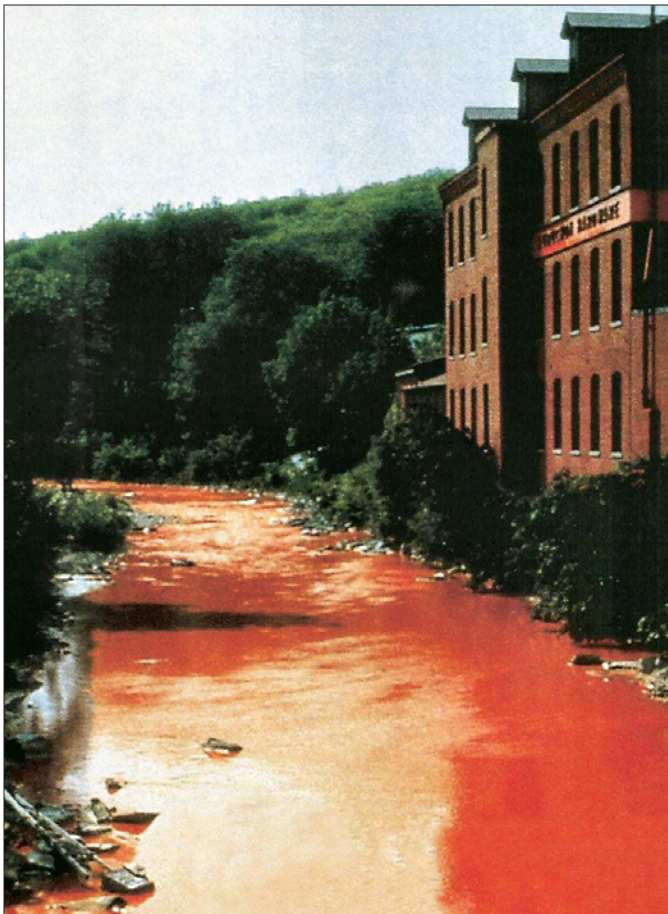
### DES Marks 25 Years of Environmental Protection

On January 2, 1987, a notable event occurred in the state of New Hampshire's efforts to protect its environment. Culminating years of legislative deliberations, a new environmental agency was created: the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. So this year, 2012, marks the 25th Anniversary of the creation of DES and its service to the people of our state. DES has played a vital role in protecting and restoring our precious natural resources and public health, which are so critical to ensuring the wonderful quality of life that we all enjoy here in the Granite State.

While efforts to address pollution problems seen in New

Hampshire and across the country predated the creation of DES, by 1987 there was broad recognition in New Hampshire that our state's ecological health and economic well-being were integrally connected and mutually dependent. As a practical business matter, the four separate agencies responsible for environmental permitting and regulation were merged to create DES (see sidebar on page 2). An important overarching goal of this action was to create a single agency that would operate in a more coordinated and consistent manner for the benefit of all of the new department's many stakeholders.

*The Nashua River in Nashua, then and now.*



*Commissioner, continued on page 2*

## Commissioner's Column

*continued from page 1*

Early in its history, DES responded to environmental challenges unthinkable to many of us today. Many of New Hampshire's wastewater plants were rudimentary in nature, sometimes resulting in raw sewage spilling into our rivers. Municipalities across the state disposed of their trash in "open burning dumps" with little regard to the toxic smoke. DES was responding to hazardous waste sites like the Gilson Road site in Nashua, a seven-acre sand and gravel pit where over 900,000 gallons of fluids containing a variety of toxic compounds were disposed of, contaminating the soils and groundwater. And we can't forget the infamous Hunt Tire pile in Danville. It was estimated that the site contained more than 5 million used tires, of which more than a million burned in a 1989 fire at this unpermitted facility.

Thankfully, over the last 25 years, our state has made tremendous strides in cleaning up our environment. Through responsible legislative and regulatory changes, we no longer witness things such as the Merrimack River changing colors based on which dye was used in the textile mills along the river. The fact that our environment is cleaner and healthier than the one our parents would remember is our lasting legacy to the current generation and those that will follow. This legacy, however, requires vigilance and maintenance, even as science and technology continue to provide ever-better ways to monitor, protect and restore our air, water bodies and groundwater.

Today, we strive to prevent contamination before it occurs, rather than

simply responding to known contaminated sites. And, with public safety as a high priority, we train diligently to hone our emergency response capabilities. These preparedness efforts have proven invaluable as DES has assisted communities across New Hampshire in recovering from floods, tornadoes, hurricanes and other disasters in recent years.

Importantly, many of the original goals set out by the enacting legislation are still at the heart of DES's work today. We strive to provide excellence in customer service to

all, whether a multi-national business looking to relocate to the state or a grandmother from Coos County who needs a copy of her approved septic system plan. We also work to provide real-time information to the public on the things that impact their daily lives, like the quality of the air we breathe, the water we drink, the water testing results at a favorite public beach, or the status of a permit application.

While we are busy at DES working to address the environmental challenges of today and tomorrow, throughout 2012 we will be taking time to recognize and celebrate the wide-ranging successes of the past 25 years of environmental and public health protection and the dedicated, professional staff and our many partners in our communities, businesses and non-profits who have helped bring these successes about. We welcome and invite your participation as we celebrate our past successes and look ahead to the challenge of ensuring that New Hampshire will be an even better place to live, work and play 25 years from now.

Tom Burack  
*Commissioner*

### Agencies brought together under DES in 1987

- Water Supply and Pollution Control Commission
- Water Resources Board
- Air Resources Agency
- Office of Waste Management



*Commissioner Burack poses with Brian Winslow, a former DES intern and now manager of Turnpike Auto Salvage in New Ipswich, at the annual Local Government Center conference held recently in Manchester.*



## ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

*Environmental News* is published six times a year by the N.H. Department of Environmental Services.

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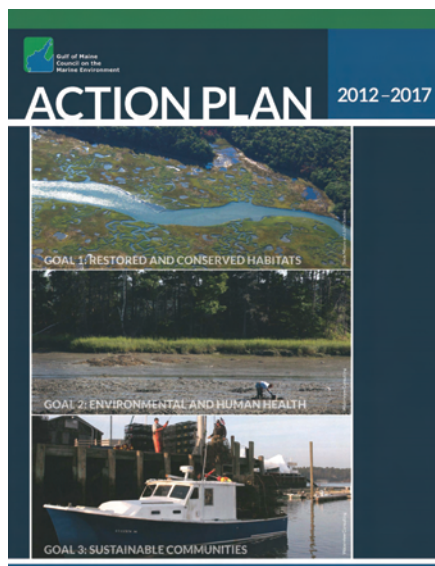
## WORKING TOGETHER

### New action plan unveiled for the Gulf of Maine

The Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment recently released its new action plan, which presents the goals, outcomes and activities that the council will pursue from 2012 to 2017 to achieve its long-term vision of a healthy and resilient Gulf of Maine. Through the action plan, the council will work toward three long-range goals: restored and conserved habitats; environmental and human health; and sustainable communities.

The Gulf of Maine Council is a US/Canadian partnership of government agencies, non-government organizations and business interests, which exchange information and engage in long-term planning to protect and enhance the environmental quality in the Gulf of Maine and its watersheds. New Hampshire, along with Maine, Massachusetts, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, participate in the council.

For more information on the Gulf of Maine Council and its new action plan, please go to [www.gulfofmaine.org](http://www.gulfofmaine.org). ■



## CERTIFICATION TRAINING RESUMES

### DES redesigns basic training for new solid waste operators

In November, DES rolled out its recently updated “basic training” program for new solid waste facility operators seeking certification, as required by state law, to work at landfills, transfer stations, waste-to-energy plants, and other solid waste management facilities. More than 150 new solid waste operators attended the one-day training, along with a number of renewing operators who attended to satisfy their annual continuing education requirements. Two sessions were held in Concord; a third took place in Lincoln.

DES will continue to provide basic training for new operators in 2012, but encourages operators to seek continuing education credits from outside providers. This is due in part to cuts in the program that reduce the number of continuing education workshops DES is able to provide, but also allows operators to find more accessible and varied training. In 2012, DES will offer a limited number of continuing education workshops in rural communities using a grant secured through the US Department of Agriculture. Those workshops will focus on best management practices at transfer stations and rural recycling strategies.

Direct any questions regarding the solid waste operator certification requirements and the applicability of alternative continuing education programs to [solid-wasteinfo@des.nh.gov](mailto:solid-wasteinfo@des.nh.gov). ■

## HELPING COMMUNITIES

### Groundwater reclassification guide for water systems

by Pierce Rigrod, Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau

Check out DES's new “A Guide to Groundwater Reclassification,” designed to help municipalities and water systems reclassify important groundwater resources, such as aquifers or wellhead protection areas. To reclassify important groundwater resources, an application must be submitted by a local entity, such as the board of selectman or city council, and then approved by DES. This guide provides important details and instructions to help complete the application process.

Established by New Hampshire's Groundwater Protection Act (RSA 485-C), reclassification allows water systems and municipalities to limit certain high-risk land uses, institute a local best management practice inspection program to minimize mismanagement of harmful contaminants, and require greater monitoring of groundwater discharges within reclassified areas.

Reclassification is an effective way to coordinate groundwater protections across town boundaries and build greater local awareness of local sources of drinking water. Today, nearly 70,000 people in New Hampshire benefit from protections established through state reclassification.

Contact Pierce Rigrod at (603) 271-0688 or [pierce.rigrod@des.nh.gov](mailto:pierce.rigrod@des.nh.gov) to learn more about reclassification. Download the new guide at <http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/documents/wd-11-24.pdf>. ■

## RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

### Jacquie Colburn— 2011 DES Employee of the Year

Jacquie Colburn, Environmental Program Manager, Rivers and Lakes Programs, is the DES 2011 Employee of the Year for being a consummate professional and personifying grace under pressure in what has been a challenging year for the programs she serves so well.

During her tenure as lakes coordinator, Jacquie provided continuous support and coordination for DES and stakeholder efforts to influence legislation relevant to the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act. In that capacity, she served on the front lines in communicating with the Lakes Management Advisory Committee and the general lakes community regarding the potential budget impacts on lakes management. When budget cuts forced program consolidation this summer, Jacquie seamlessly assumed the role of lakes and rivers coordinator, previously two full-time positions. One of her first tasks was to ensure that the nine new rivers added to the Rivers Management and Protection Program this year had local management in place.

In addition to her new program responsibilities, she has also become the de facto coordinator for river issues in the aftermath of the destruction caused by tropical storm Irene. The interagency Post-Irene River Response Team, which she leads, has been working to coordinate flood response issues, including permits, technical assistance and inquiries, to name a few. Jacquie identified the inefficiencies and immediately forged a collaborative solution and innovative effort that will benefit DES, other agencies and the general public.

By the nature of her dual coordinator responsibilities, Jacquie attends a seemingly endless number of river-related night meetings and weekend lake association annual meetings. Throughout Jacquie's career, her focus has been and is always to serve the public first and foremost; she is a model public servant.

In addition to all of her work-related duties, Jacquie has devoted many volunteer hours in several roles associated with the annual United Way Charitable Campaign; she's a current trustee of the Loon Preservation Committee; and she has served on her local conservation commission. Jacquie provides a daily example of what public service should be. Congratulations, Jacquie! ■

## CASE STUDY

### A long journey to resolution for DES and small business owner

Commitment, follow-through, partnering and compromise were all skills used to finalize a site remediation project that successfully protected the environment from potential contamination and saved a small business owner from financial hardship.

In 2005, a small, New Hampshire laboratory situated in a residential area experienced a hazardous material incident, for which DES was contacted to assist the local authorities. After a thorough consideration of the lab's location, its septic system and materials involved, DES requested a site investigation. Results from soil samples taken at the site indicated the presence of mercury.

In 2009, the lab owner contacted Sara Johnson, DES Small Business Ombudsman, for assistance after he received invoices for the cost of the investigation report. Johnson consulted with Mike Wimsatt, director of the Waste Management Division, and Mike McCluskey, project remediation lead, to determine the most desirable outcome.

The team determined the optimal goal of this project was to remove, treat and dispose of the contaminated soil for the health and safety of the owner and the surrounding

residents. The laboratory was closed, but the owner was still residing in the building. Through the partnership, DES worked with the owner to create and receive approval of a remedial action plan and implement the plan within a specified time period. The owner agreed to the terms and agreed to pay for the cleanup costs associated with the plan.

In October 2011, the owner, who had met all of the conditions in the agreement, received a "Certificate of No Further Action" from DES, thus concluding

the project. While this case took six years to resolve, it was the commitment of DES staff, their willingness to come to a consensus, and sensitivity toward the impacts on a small business that produced the desired outcome of a clean site.

For more information about the DES Small Business Technical Assistance Program, please contact Sara Johnson at (603) 271-1379 or [sara.johnson@des.nh.gov](mailto:sara.johnson@des.nh.gov). ■



*Employee of the Year Jacquie Colburn stands with Gov. Lynch and Commissioner Burack (right).*



## RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

### Fred McGarry presented with the 2011 David S. Chase Memorial Award

Frederick J. McGarry, P.E., D.E.E., Waste Management Division, was awarded the David S. Chase Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievements in Science at the recent annual DES employee recognition awards ceremony. Fred received this honor for his landmark work assessing and mitigating groundwater contamination threats. Fred has consistently been on the leading edge of state and national efforts to investigate and respond to emerging groundwater contamination threats, including those posed by MtBE, EDB and 1,4-dioxane. Fred was in the first wave of researchers to document the prevalence of these contaminants in groundwater. As chief engineer and assistant director of the DES Waste Management Division, Fred has worked to ensure that New Hampshire's response to these threats was coordinated, based on the latest scientific knowledge, and focused on meaningful results.

During his 16 years at DES, Fred coordinated and designed a variety of research projects focused on understanding emerging contamination issues, collaborated with local and national groups, helped to develop scientifically defensible standards to use as benchmarks for managing these contaminants, and engaged in extensive outreach efforts to educate the public and businesses on prevention and mitigation of impacts of contaminants. Based upon this work, New Hampshire became the first and only state to create a fund for the specific purpose of addressing MtBE contamination.

Fred worked with UNH, USGS and EPA to conduct joint research, helping to obtain the funding, and coauthoring journal articles. This research includes



*Fred McGarry (center) being congratulated by Gov. Lynch and Commissioner Burack (right).*

studies of the distribution of MtBE in New Hampshire's groundwater and surface waters, the prevalence of MtBE in public and private drinking water supplies, the composition of gasoline products in the state, and the presence of 1,4-dioxane in groundwater at

landfills and chlorinated solvent sites. Fred's relationships with renowned EPA scientists made it possible for DES to participate in a number of nationwide studies on these topics, thereby enhancing our understanding of the fate and transport of these contaminants in our state. His participation in key national groups addressing these issues has ensured that New Hampshire has a voice in national research, education and policy-making efforts. He is a strong advocate for rigorous adherence to the highest standards of scientific and engineering practices and ethics, and he personally adheres to these standards.

The state of New Hampshire has benefited greatly from Fred's work to respond to the enormous challenges posed by these widespread threats to our aquifers and drinking water supplies. We at DES are both fortunate and proud to call Fred our colleague, and extend our heartfelt congratulations to him on this well-deserved award. ■



*A winter scene in Weare, photographed by Chris Bonner.*

## Third annual Watershed Roundtable and project site tour

The DES Watershed Assistance Section recently held its third annual Watershed Roundtable and project sites tour in the Lakes Region. More than 50 past, present and future recipients of Watershed Assistance and Restoration grants spent the morning discussing solutions to various project struggles they encounter. Participants then toured projects funded by 319 and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, including a restored and day-lighted stream, and several innovative beachside best management practices that help keep Center Harbor's waters clean. DES project partners and hosts included the city of Laconia, Center Harbor DPW, Lake Winnepesaukee Watershed Association, and Belknap County Conservation District. ■



During the Watershed Roundtable site tour, Matt Marawski, of DuBois & King Inc., explains the fluvial geomorphology concepts incorporated into the Anthony Drive stream restoration project in Laconia.

## 2011 Longevity Awards

### 35 YEARS

William P. Haskell WD

### 30 YEARS

Laurie K. Cullerot WD

Mary T. Power WD

### 25 YEARS

Carl W. Baxter WMD

Jeffrey G. Andrews WD

Karlee A. Kenison WMD

Timothy J. Noury WMD

Wendy L. Waskin WD

James W. Berg WD

Charles A. Corliss, Jr. WD

Marjorie P. Yin ARD

Robert M. Livingston WD

Stephanie A. D'Agostino CO

Normajeane M. Smith CO

Denise M. Frappier WD

### 20 YEARS

George J. Carrigan WMD

Arthur J. O'Connell, Sr. WD

Leonard Raposa WD

Stergios K. Spanos WD

Kendall L. Perkins ARD

Raymond A. Walters ARD

George F. Carlson, Jr. WD

Gregory A. Kirby WMD

Robert P. Minicucci II CO

Paul L. Lockwood ARD

Kevin J. Riel WD

Tod G. Leedberg WMD

Kimberly A. Mahon CO

W. Gregg Comstock WD

Eric J. Williams WD

Collis G. Adams WD

Wendy A. Stout WD

Michele J. Roberge ARD

Debra M. Brown WD

Stephen R. Sawicki WD

### 15 YEARS

Frederick J. McGarry WMD

Lisa L. Landry ARD

Ridgely Mauck WD

David D. Reid WMD

Linda L. Thompson WD

Tricia M. Madore WD

Kerry J. O'Connor CO

Andrew T. Chapman WD

David B. Larson ARD

### 10 YEARS

Kevin L. Whelan WD

Kenneth S. Osgood, Jr. WD

Sheri R. Eldridge ARD

Carolyn C. Guerdet WD

Linda S. Lester WD

David S. Healy ARD

Carey A. Timmins WD

Eric K. Abrams WMD

Sally A. Soule WD

Jessica E. Morton ARD

Owen David WD

Barbara Dorfschmidt ARD

Kenneth J. Edwardson WD

Christie M. Faro WMD

Linda R. Birmingham WMD

Jason G. Domke WMD

Vanessa A. Burnes WD

Jeffrey M. Blaney WD

## DES donates generously to Warmth from the Millyard

Thank you to all that donated clothing to our Warmth from the Millyard clothing drive. This was DES's third year participating. We collected about 20 large 30-gallon size bags full of clothes, which were delivered before Thanksgiving. The Warmth from the Millyard said on its blog at <http://wfmy.wordpress.com/>, "The contributions of the DES ranged from new to used clothing and filled our small storage locker almost to capacity! Thank you, DES!" ■



Jim Martin (center), DES Public Information Officer and organizer of the DES clothing drive, stands with Barbara Buccino (in green sweat-shirt) and others from Makeover Ministry, one of the organizations that will be receiving the benefits from this clothing drive.



## Goal surpassed, once again, in 2011 Food Drive

For the third year in a row, DES and other state agencies surpassed the goal of collecting 10,000 food items in the annual food drive. This year, DES, with the help of the departments of Administrative Services, Agriculture, Banking, Cultural Resources, Transportation, Education, Employment Security, Fish and Game, and Health and Human Services collected approximately 11,166 food items. The food was given to both the NH Food Bank and to the Capital Region Food Program's Holiday Food Basket Program. ■



*DES employees collected over 5,000 food items.*



*DES Commissioner Tom Burack (right) and Water Division Director Harry Stewart (left) congratulate Mike Wimsatt, Waste Management Division director, for his division's winning the coveted DES Food Drive Challenge Trophy. For the first time, the WMD beat out the Water Division in the friendly in-house challenge. Thanks in part to this "intramural" competition, DES is able to collect thousands of food items for the annual food drive.*

## Partnerships work in surprising ways. How one helped to find a hubcap.



**A**rrghh! Pot holes! Have you ever lost a hubcap before? Well let me tell you, once you do, it can be no easy task getting a replacement. Sure, you can contact your dealership and they can order you a new one, but once I heard the price I nearly flipped. After recovering from the shock, I politely declined. I wasn't sure the Blue Book value of my 2002 Toyota Corolla would justify the expense. Plus I naively thought I could just get one here or there.

Fast forward eight months, when I was working the DES booth at the Annual Local Government Center Conference in Manchester. This conference is a must-attend event for DES every year, because it provides us with an opportunity to talk face to face with key people from cities and towns, and critical partners and vendors from around the state.

One such partner, who I was pleased to see, was Jeff Kantor of the NH Auto and Truck Recyclers Association. DES and the NHATRA work closely together on promoting best management practices for New Hampshire salvage yards, including DES's NH Certified Green Yards Program. This was the

first time the NHATRA was represented at this conference, which turned out to be very fortunate.

I have met Jeff, who's an owner and operator of a NH Certified Green Yard himself, on several occasions, and have purchased recycled auto parts from him in the past. I immediately began telling Jeff my sob story about my lost hubcap (still missing, eight months after the fact!). Jeff explained that most salvage yards don't have the time or interest to deal in hubcaps because of the vast variety of designs for each different vehicle make and model, but given the fact that there are a lot of Toyota Corollas on the road, he would make a call or two for me.

I was surprised to hear from Jeff less than 24 hours later saying he had located a Corolla hubcap for me! The price was less than a third of what a new hubcap would cost. Plus, the added benefit of buying a recycled auto part, versus buying a new part, is a more environmentally sound purchase. So I guess the moral of the story is that the positive partnerships we make in life can help us to navigate around even the worst pot hole.

For information about the Green Yards program, see [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov) and search the A to Z List for "Green Yards." ■

## CONSUMER TIPS

# Phantom loads: a waste of electricity

Did you know that energy used to power small household appliances and home electronics is one of the fastest growing energy loads in the home?

In the December issue of *GreenWorks*, we examined some the areas in which homeowners can save more on their electric bills simply by following a few easy steps.

Unfortunately, most idle small appliances and equipment, like TVs, DVD and CD players, cable boxes, computers, micro-waves, and cordless phones, cell phone chargers—all battery chargers for that matter—continue to draw energy when not in use. This phenomenon is referred to as “standby power,” “leaking electricity,” or “phantom loads.” According to the Lawrence Berkley National Laboratory, a typical home has as many as 40 appliances on standby power that are consuming electricity 24 hours a day, and may be responsible for 10 percent to 15 percent of the average home’s electricity costs.

The good news is that there are ways to fight back and reduce these phantom loads in your home. First, inspect for electrical devices that have a clock, need a remote control, charge a battery, are plugged into the wall with a wall cube or transformer, or don’t have an “off” switch. Next, unplug products that are used infrequently. You can also make a difference by considering the phantom load when purchasing a product.

To read the complete article about phantom loads and how to calculate your own energy usage, please go to <http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/newsletters/green-works/documents/201112-greenworks.pdf>. For more information about leaking electricity, visit the US Department of Energy website at <http://energy.gov>. And for more information about energy efficiency, see the DES website at [www.des.nh.gov/](http://www.des.nh.gov/) or contact the DES Air Resources Division at (603) 271-1370. ■



Gov. Lynch, Employee of the Year Jacquie Colburn (in hunter orange vest) and Commissioner Burack join in a group photo of DES staff members during the annual DES holiday celebration.



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